

REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated March 12, 2009. Claims 1, 6-10, 13, and 15-19 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 10, and 19 are in independent form. Claims 1, 10, 13, 18, and 19 have been amended purely as to matters of form and not to overcome any of the rejections discussed below. Favorable consideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1, 6-10, 13, and 15-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,580,177 (*Gase et al.*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,401,113 (*Appiah et al.*). For at least the following reasons, Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 10, and 19, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that has a plurality of print control modules, including first and second print control modules, for performing processing corresponding to printer functions. Each print control module supports a plurality of types of printers. The information processing apparatus also has a management table that contains identification information of the first print control module, version information of the first print control module, and printer type information regarding printers supported by the first print control module. The information processing apparatus further includes an obtaining unit, an updating unit, a recognition unit, a selection unit, and an execution unit.

The obtaining unit obtains, from the second print control module, version information of the second print control module and printer type information regarding the plurality of types of printers supported by the second print control module. The recognition unit

recognizes a printer type of a certain printer. The selection unit selects one of the first and second print control modules in correspondence with the printer type recognized by the recognition unit by referring to the management table updated by the updating unit. The execution unit executes the print control module selected by the selection unit.

Notable features of Claim 1 include the obtaining unit and the updating unit. By virtue of the operation of these features, a newest one of multiple versions of a printer driver that supports multiple types of printers can be selected by the information processing apparatus, for example¹.

Gase et al. is understood to relate to printers that are connected to a network and that are accessible from a plurality of client processors via a file server, wherein most recently updated printer driver procedures installed in the client processors are centrally available, and wherein the client processors are continuously informed of a printer's availability status (see col. 1, lines 7-14). *Gase et al.* discusses that a file server 16 stores a printer/driver table 36 that associates each printer connected to the file server 16 with a printer driver procedure for the printer, which is used to access printer driver procedures stored in a printer/driver library 38 for a plurality of models of printers (see col. 3, line 51, to col. 4, line 2). The file server 16 includes a memory 34 that stores a most updated version 28¹ of a printer administration utility program 28 and an updated version 24¹ of a printer utility program 24 (see col. 4, lines 10-12). When a client processor elects to utilize a particular printer, the client processor determines whether its printer driver 26 is consistent with the most updated printer driver version in the printer driver library 38 (see col. 4, lines 17-20). If not, the client processor causes its printer driver 26 to be overwritten

^{1/} Any examples presented herein are intended for illustrative purposes and are not to be construed to limit the scope of the claims.

to reflect the most updated printer/driver version contained within the printer driver library 38 (see col. 4, lines 20-23).

Gase et al. also discusses that, in response to a printer utility 24 in a client processor requesting a print job from the file server 16, the file server 16 provides the requesting client processor with a list of available printers (see col. 6, lines 5-8). Upon selection of a printer, the client processor causes the file server 16, via the printer/driver table 36 and the printer/driver library 38, to compare a printer driver in the library 38 with a printer driver 26 contained in the client processor (see col. 6, lines 5-12). If the compared printer drivers do not match, an updated printer driver is down-loaded into the client processor from the printer/driver library 38 (see col. 6, lines 12-15).

As best understood by Applicant, the printer driver 26 in the client processor is compared to the printer driver in library 38. *Gase et al.* fails to teach or suggest that version information regarding the two printer drivers is compared. Moreover, *Gase et al.* fails to teach or suggest that one printer driver is capable of supporting a plurality of types of printers.

Appiah et al. is understood to relate to a client-server system in which a proper printer driver for a printer attached to a client is identified (see col. 1, lines 6-8). *Appiah et al.* discusses that a server 52 obtains printer driver information, which identifies a printer driver that is expected to be installed on the server 52 for use with a printer 88 (see col. 5, line 65, to col. 6, line 1). An “expected driver” can be determined in various manners (see col. 6, lines 1-2). A user of a client 54 may indicate a particular printer driver to use (see col. 6, lines 2-7). Alternatively, a Plug-and-Play (PnP) subsystem on the client 54 may indicate that a particular printer driver is to be used, for example, using a PnP identifier that can be resolved by the server 52 into a driver name and version (see col. 6, lines 2-7). Typically printer driver information for one printer will

identify a single printer driver, although multiple printer drivers, including multiple names and multiple versions, may be identified in the printer driver information (see col. 6, lines 9-13).

Accordingly, *Appiah et al.* discloses that a printer driver may be identified by version, and that multiple printer drivers may be used with a given printer. However, nothing has been found in *Appiah et al.* that teaches or suggests that a single printer driver can be used with a plurality of types of printers.

Applicant submits that a combination of *Gase et al.* and *Appiah et al.*, assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest an information processing apparatus that includes “an obtaining unit configured to obtain, from the second print control module, version information of the second print control module and printer type information regarding the plurality of types of printers supported by the second print control module,” and “an updating unit configured to update the management table by recording identification information of the second print control module, and the version information and the printer type information obtained by said obtaining unit in the management table, if at least one printer type of the printer type information for the second print control module obtained by said obtaining unit is identical to at least one printer type of the printer type information for the first print control module contained in the management table and if the version information of the second print control module obtained by said obtaining unit is newer than the version information of the first print control module contained in the management table,” as recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent Claims 10 and 19 include features similar to those of Claim 1 and are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. The other claims in the present

application depend from one or another of independent Claims 1 and 10 and are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, individual consideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and an early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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